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Author:

**Reynolds, Helen  
Wilkinson**

Title:

**Annals of a century-old  
business**

Place:

**[Poughkeepsie, NY]**

Date:

**[1919]**

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R33  
Reynolds, H. W.  
Annals of a century-old business, Wm. T. Reynolds & co., incorporated, Poughkeepsie, New York, 1819-1919, by Helen Wilkinson Reynolds. c1919 ?  
c31. p. illus., plate, ports. 24 cm.

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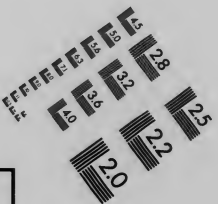
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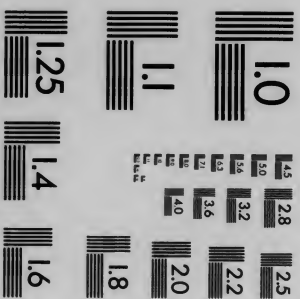
# PM-MGP 13"x18" METRIC GENERAL PURPOSE TARGET PHOTOGRAPHIC



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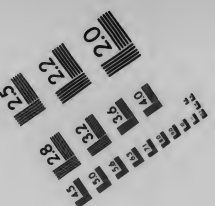
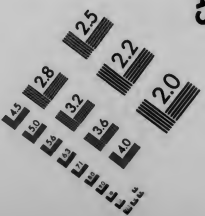
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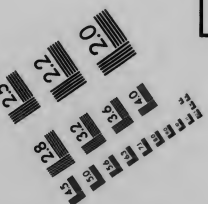
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## PRECISION<sup>SM</sup> RESOLUTION TARGETS



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St. Paul, MN 55119



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Annals of a  
Century-old  
Business

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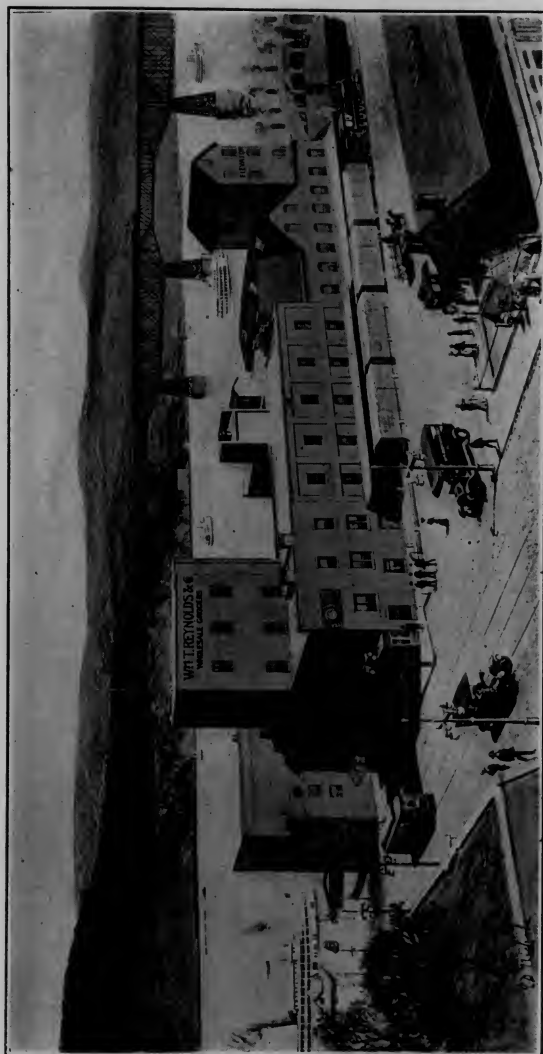


School of Business

Given by

W. T. Reynolds Co.





General Offices and Warehouse, Poughkeepsie, N. Y.  
Wm. T. Reynolds & Co., Inc.

# Annals of a Century-old Business

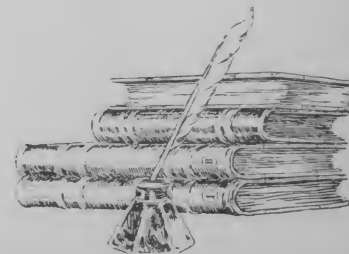
W<sup>m</sup>. T. Reynolds & Co.  
*Incorporated*

Poughkeepsie,  
New York

1819 - 1919

by

Helen Wilkinson Reynolds







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W. T. Reynolds Co.  
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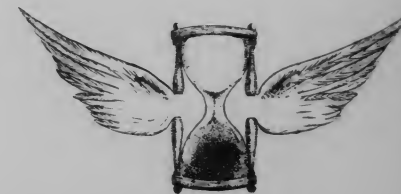
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See May 15, 1934

## THE LIFE-STORY OF A CENTURY-OLD BUSINESS

1819—1919

About the year 1800 a youth in  
CAUSES his early twenties, James Reynolds,  
made his way from the shore of  
Narragansett Bay in Rhode Island across New  
England to the little village of Poughkeepsie  
on the Hudson River. He was born while the  
War of the Revolution was being fought and  
grew to manhood in the years following that  
war, years when the new-born nation of the  
United States was struggling to consolidate its  
unity and independence, amidst the difficul-  
ties of the economic depression that resulted  
from the conflict. From the static, long settled  
towns of New England the younger men wand-  
ered forth in the post-Revolutionary days, seek-  
ing new opportunities in life, and this migra-  
tory movement it was that brought James  
Reynolds to Poughkeepsie at the opening of  
the nineteenth century.



Poughkeepsie, with some  
**CONDITIONS** fifteen hundred inhabitants,  
 was incorporated as a village  
 in 1799 and, in the next twenty-five years, there  
 took place in the community steady recupera-  
 tion from the weakness left by the War for In-  
 dependence. In the building up of the village  
 James Reynolds bore a substantial part through  
 his contribution to the growth of its commer-  
 cial activity. High up on the hill, above the  
 river, Poughkeepsie began its existence as a  
 road-crossing, with a Court House for a land-  
 mark, and its business continued local in char-  
 acter in that neighborhood for many years.  
 Down on the river-front, however, commerce  
 on a broader scale began to appear at the time  
 when James Reynolds arrived.

At the mouth of the  
**OPPORTUNITY** Fall Kill, where the stream  
 empties into the Hudson,  
 there is a waterfall which is first heard of as a  
 site for a mill in 1683. In that year an Indian  
 made a deed of gift of the falls to a white man  
 and the deed recites that the falls were called  
 "Pooghkepesingh." This is the first known  
 instance of the use of the Indian term which ul-  
 timately became the name of the hamlet on the  
 hill. All through the eighteenth century the  
 mill on the waterfall, "Pooghkepesingh," was



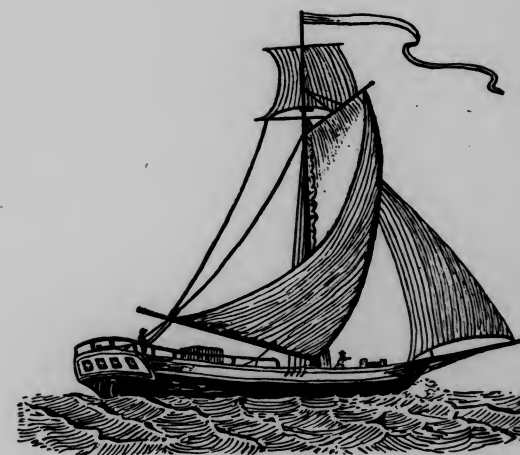
The Waterfall called "Pooghkepesingh" in 1683.  
 From a photograph taken 1919



owned by well known citizens. It passed through the hands (among others) of Myndert Harmense, Colonel Leonard Lewis, Clear Everitt and Robert L. Livingston and, in 1800, title to the mill and the falls and a surrounding parcel of land was taken by three brothers,—Martin, Isaac and Robert Hoffman. In 1807 the Hoffmans formed a partnership with George P. Oakley, under the name of *George P. Oakley & Company*, and the firm introduced modern business methods. They began the systematic development of the neighborhood, building a new grist mill, plaster and saw mills, new docks and new storehouses and advertising the improvements. Then the farmers of Dutchess County began hauling their produce to the new distributing center. By 1810 James Reynolds (who had married at Poughkeepsie in 1803) had bought land of the Hoffmans, built a dwelling for his family and, in 1811 (according to tradition), was in partnership with Aaron Innis in a line of boats on the river. In 1816 *Reynolds & Innis* opened a storehouse at the mouth of the Fall Kill for the foodstuffs the farmers brought from the county and for ships' supplies to meet the needs of the rising river-trade, and they carried both freight and passengers on their boats. Tradition says they owned a shipyard and built sloops. James Reynolds was also one of the organizers and first directors (1819) of the



Original Storehouse built in or before 1816  
by Reynolds & Innis



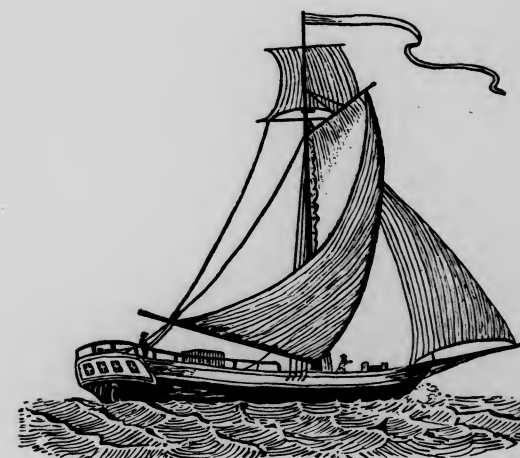
Type of Hudson River Sloop  
First quarter nineteenth century  
From a woodcut

## INTENTIONAL SECOND EXPOSURE

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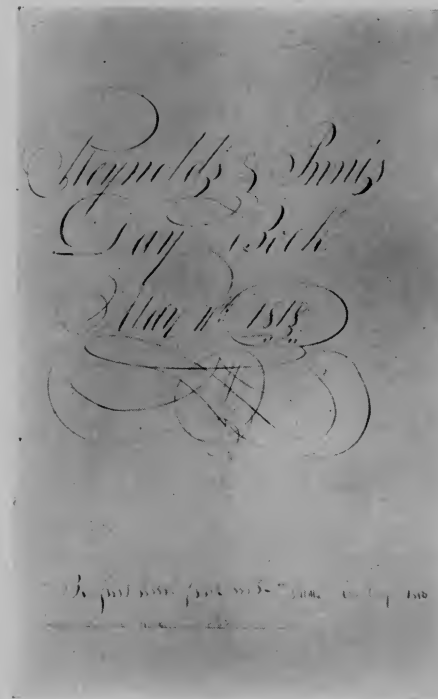
Type of Hudson River Sloop  
First quarter nineteenth century  
From a woodcut

*Poughkeepsie & New Paltz Ferry Company*  
The company introduced a team-ferry, as an improvement on a scow with sails and oars, and followed that (in 1830) with a steam-ferry that bore the name "James Reynolds." In 1819 *George P. Oakley & Company* failed and, soon after, their grist and plaster mills on the waterfall and their docks and river-frontage were acquired by *Reynolds & Innis*. The modern wholesale house of *Wm. T. Reynolds & Company, Inc.*, is derived from the business enterprises of *Reynolds & Innis*, established in or before 1816, but the year 1819 has been arbitrarily selected as the date of its founding because accounts of that year show wholesale transactions in the original storehouse.

The setting for the business life of James Reynolds consisted of a growing village, the increased use of water-power and the organization of scheduled transportation service on the Hudson. In his day the steamboat was first run successfully (1807) and sloops, barges and steamboats were all in use in the 'twenties. James Reynolds was succeeded by his sons, William W. Reynolds and James Reynolds, Jr. They, again, were affected as a firm by changing conditions. The village of Poughkeepsie grew in population and importance and was



Type of Steamboat and Barge used on the Hudson in the 'twenties  
From a woodcut



Fly-Leaf from Ledger  
1818



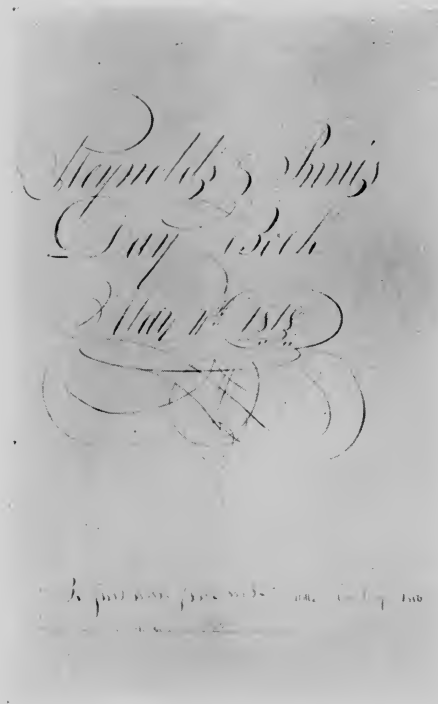
Upper Landing and Steam Ferry, 1840  
From a woodcut in *Barber's Historical Collections of the State of New York*

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From a woodcut



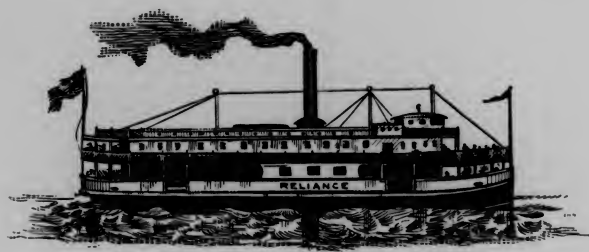
Fly-Leaf from Ledger  
1818



Upper Landing and Steam Ferry, 1840  
From a woodcut in Barber's *Historical Collections*  
of the State of New York



incorporated as a city (1854). The 'thirties and 'forties were years of great activity on the river, the result of the break-up (1824) of the monopoly of steamboat-traffic exercised by the *North River Steamboat Company*. The Erie Canal (opened 1825) brought western grain to Albany and *W. W. & J. Reynolds, Jr.*, maintained a line of sloops, to connect freight and passengers with the canal, and built a larger warehouse (1849) at their Poughkeepsie dock. In 1854 the firm built its own steam propellor, "Reliance."



It may be permissible to interpolate at this point that the "Reliance" was used by the United States Government as a gun-boat during the Civil War and that a famous modern brand of food-products was named in honor of it.



Type of Horse-Ferry  
Used on the Hudson in the 'twenties  
From a woodcut



Storehouse of W. W. & J. Reynolds, Jr.  
1849

The greatest change that  
**EXTENSION** occurred in the days of *W. W.*

*& J. Reynolds, Jr.*, was the opening of the Hudson River Railroad, an event destined to revolutionize trade and society in the valley of the Hudson. Trains ran between New York and Poughkeepsie in 1850 and the road was completed to Albany in 1851. Steadily the locomotive and the rails encroached upon the water-routes for transportation and, by 1872, the firm (then become *W. W. Reynolds & Co.*) was again obliged to increase its facilities. On a siding of the railroad, opposite the Poughkeepsie passenger station, they erected a new and larger warehouse, to which in 1884 a grain



Type of Locomotive and Cars, 1850, from a woodcut



elevator was added. This change of site marked the close of the long period of years in which the business had been identified in varied forms with the river-front and the Fall Kill. It also marked the opening of the modern chapter of the history of the house.

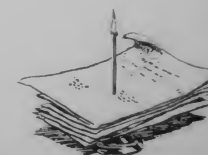
**PRESENT** In the last quarter of the nineteenth century the grandsons of James Reynolds developed still more broadly the business he established. After 1872, when the large storehouse was opened on the line of the railroad, their boats on the river were discontinued and their warehouse at the mouth of the Fall Kill closed. In 1887 they added to their flour and grain elevator a department for wholesale groceries, an offshoot which, like many a child, has now outgrown its parent. This branch had by 1909 become so enlarged, had reached out so widely and in such complex ways, that, for the third time, a more capacious warehouse was built to meet increased needs. In this latest building one grandson and two great-grandsons of James Reynolds celebrate in June, 1919, a rounded century of business by a family and a firm. The founder of the house lived in a post-war period. He knew its difficulties and its opportunities and had the acumen to build out of these elements a substantial commercial structure for himself and his



Storehouse of W. W. Reynolds & Company, 1872



Office of Reynolds & Company, 1889



## INTENTIONAL SECOND EXPOSURE

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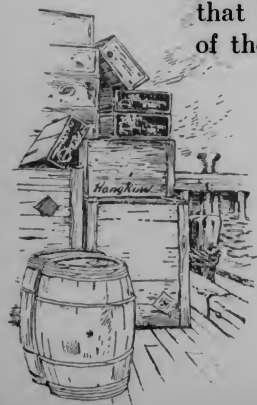
Storehouse of W. W. Reynolds & Company, 1872



Office of Reynolds & Company, 1889

community. In his example and success lies a prophecy, it is hoped, of the extended prosperity and usefulness of this house in the second century of its existence.

The distribution of foodstuffs in large quantities, to large numbers, over large areas has been the business of this house from its inception. And distribution has always been dependent upon transportation. Sailing vessels, barges towed by steam, steam-propellers and the railroad have followed each other in succession in the experience of the house. In 1919 the motor-truck is already well established as an increasingly important factor in distribution. Moving independently, without a time-table or tracks, it penetrates the territory surrounding Poughkeepsie for wide distances and serves rural districts off the line of a railroad. In the spring of 1919 Poughkeepsie was made a terminal for the enlarged and improved barge canal system and the site of the terminal landing is almost under the eaves of the warehouse of *Wm. T. Reynolds & Co.* Shortly before the Great War began the Panama Canal was opened. The war interrupted its trade usefulness temporarily but, with the coming of peace, there is prospect that the food-products of the sunny regions of the Pacific will be brought by the company



Motor Trucks  
1919



Terminal of Barge Canal  
Poughkeepsie  
1919



## INTENTIONAL SECOND EXPOSURE

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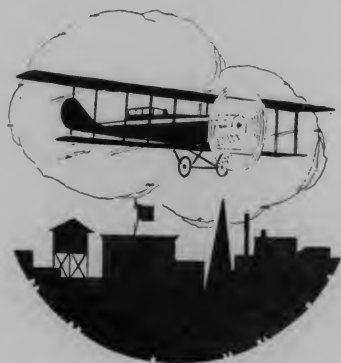
Motor Trucks  
1919



Terminal of Barge Canal  
Poughkeepsie  
1919



directly to Poughkeepsie by way of the canal, the Atlantic and the Hudson. These are three of the steps in the evolution of transportation in the firm's second century. Will the commercial aeroplane be the fourth? Looking back over a hundred years of steady progress in the measure and methods of its business *Wm. T. Reynolds & Co.* looks forward into the future with confidence that the coming years hold promise of new opportunities and new possibilities for growth and development.



## PARTNERSHIPS AND FIRM-NAMES

### REYNOLDS & INNIS, 18(11)—1837.

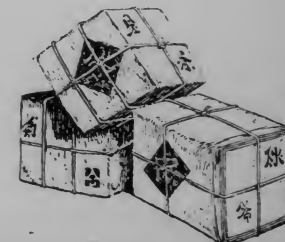
By tradition James Reynolds and Aaron Innis were in partnership in 1811. Evidence shows their association in business in 1816. They remained in more or less close connection until 1837. From 1816 to 1832 *Reynolds & Innis* conducted a storehouse on the Fall Kill at the junction of Mill and Water streets, where they handled flour, grain, plaster, farm-produce and ships' supplies. In 1819 their accounts show wholesale transactions and from that year the present wholesale house of *Wm. T. Reynolds & Co., Inc.*, dates its existence. *Reynolds & Innis*, in partnership with Captain John C. Van Valkenburgh, sailing master, also operated a line of boats between Poughkeepsie and New York under the firm-name of *J. C. Van Valkenburgh & Co.* About 1825 they added a service between Poughkeepsie and Albany. James Reynolds and Aaron Innis were engaged in the river-trade together from (perhaps) 1811 to 1834. They also owned in partnership from 1821 to 1837 the mills on the Fall Kill, in which they ground grist and plaster and cut dyewoods.

### W. W. & J. REYNOLDS, JR., 1835—1865.

In 1832 the storehouse of *Reynolds & Innis* was taken over by William Winans Reynolds (elder son of James Reynolds) and he, in 1835, formed a partnership with his brother, James Reynolds, Jr. *W. W. and J. Reynolds, Jr.*, built a new warehouse in 1849 and they maintained a line of sloops between Poughkeepsie and the terminal of the Erie Canal at Albany until 1854. In the latter year they replaced their sloops with the steam-propellor, "Reliance."

### REYNOLDS & SON, 1865—1869.

At the death of James Reynolds, Jr., the firm was reorganized and included: William Winans Reynolds, William Thacher Reynolds.





**W. W. REYNOLDS & COMPANY, 1869—1874.**

When the elder son of James Reynolds, Jr., attained his majority the firm was reorganized and included: William Winans Reynolds, William Thacher Reynolds, John Richardson Reynolds. During this partnership a new warehouse was built (1872) on a new site near the railroad, the old buildings were closed and the boat-line discontinued.

**REYNOLDS & COMPANY, 1874—1889.**

At the death of William Winans Reynolds the firm was reorganized and included: William Thacher Reynolds, John Richardson Reynolds, George E. Cramer. During this partnership a wholesale grocery department was added (1887) to the flour and grain business of the house.

**REYNOLDS & CRAMER, 1890—1899.**

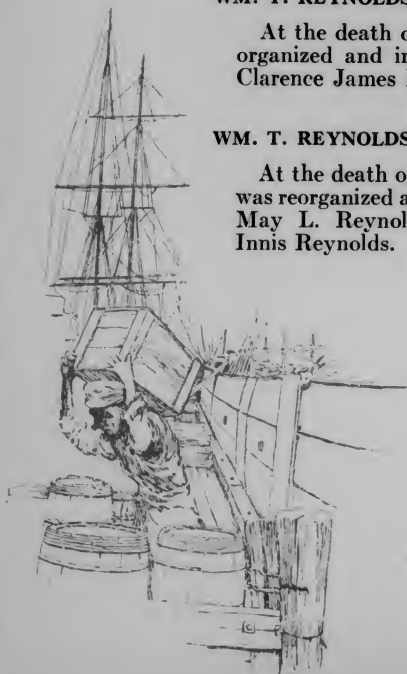
At the death of John Richardson Reynolds the firm was reorganized and included: William Thacher Reynolds, George E. Cramer, Clarence James Reynolds, Harris Smith Reynolds.

**WM. T. REYNOLDS & CO., 1900—1917.**

At the death of George E. Cramer the firm was reorganized and included: William Thacher Reynolds, Clarence James Reynolds, Harris Smith Reynolds.

**WM. T. REYNOLDS & CO., Inc., 1917.**

At the death of William Thacher Reynolds the firm was reorganized and included: Harris Smith Reynolds, May L. Reynolds, Clarence James Reynolds, Paul Innis Reynolds.



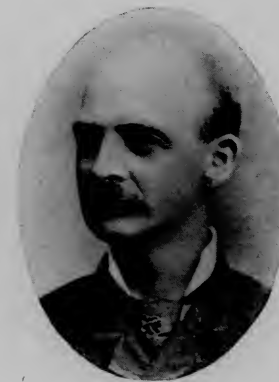
William Winans Reynolds



James Reynolds, Jr.



William Thacher Reynolds



John Richardson Reynolds

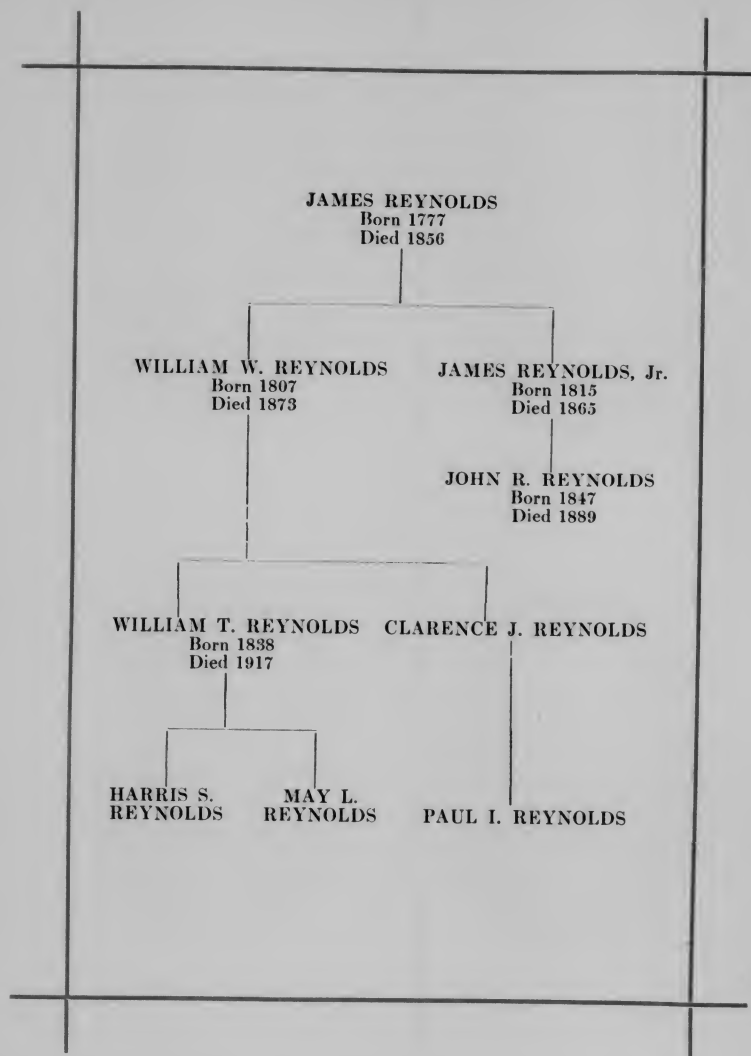


Chart showing relationship between those of James Reynolds' descendants who have been members in the firm which he founded.



George E. Cramer



Clarence James Reynolds



Harris Smith Reynolds



Paul Innis Reynolds



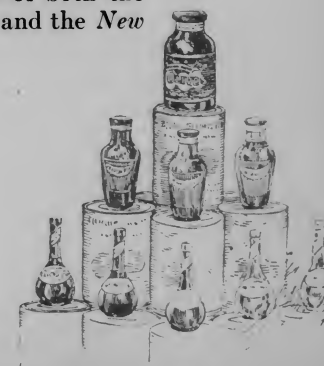


Delivery Fleet, 1919

## WM. T. REYNOLDS & CO., INC.

1919

**A MODERN BUSINESS** In 1914 a national business expert made the statement that there were not four hundred business houses in the United States which were a century old, while commercial statistics show that out of (approximately) every two hundred enterprises only one lives for thirty-five years. In the light of these facts the long history of *Wm. T. Reynolds & Co.* is noteworthy. But, in modern times, mere age is without value in the business world. Vitality and growth are essential to the success either of an old or new firm. It is therefore pointed out here that, although belonging to the limited class of century-old concerns, this house is now doing a more extensive business than ever before and one which is steadily gaining and developing. Following the enlargement and improvement of the company's buildings, carried out in 1909-1910, all departments have increased in activity and some have nearly doubled previous records. The headquarters-plant occupies a site providing unsurpassed facilities for transportation, connecting as it does with the tracks of both the *New York Central and Hudson River* and the *New*





Delivery Fleet, 1919

## WM. T. REYNOLDS & CO., INC.

1919

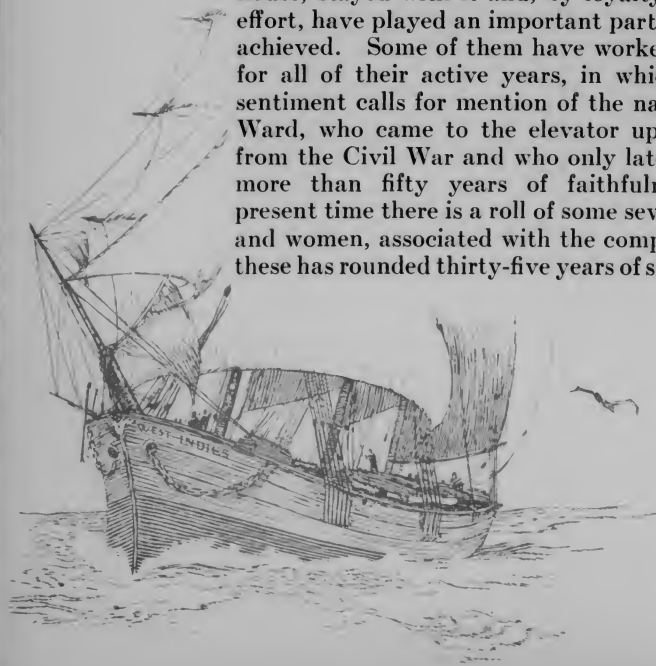
A MODERN BUSINESS

In 1914 a national business expert made the statement that there were not four hundred business houses in the United States which were a century old, while commercial statistics show that out of (approximately) every two hundred enterprises only one lives for thirty-five years. In the light of these facts the long history of *Wm. T. Reynolds & Co.* is noteworthy. But, in modern times, mere age is without value in the business world. Vitality and growth are essential to the success either of an old or new firm. It is therefore pointed out here that, although belonging to the limited class of century-old concerns, this house is now doing a more extensive business than ever before and one which is steadily gaining and developing. Following the enlargement and improvement of the company's buildings, carried out in 1909-1910, all departments have increased in activity and some have nearly doubled previous records. The headquarters-plant occupies a site providing unsurpassed facilities for transportation, connecting as it does with the tracks of both the *New York Central and Hudson River* and the *New*

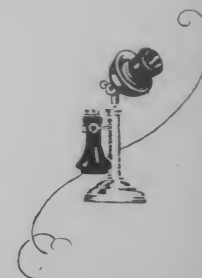


*York, New Haven and Hartford Railroads* and with the shipping lines on the Hudson River. The buildings are of reinforced concrete, fire-proof construction, are equipped with modern labor-saving appliances, and are kept in strictly sanitary condition. They include the main offices, a refrigerating plant, a coffee roasting and packing department, a grain elevator and mills. The several departments conducted are those of: staple and fancy groceries; teas, coffees, spices and specialties; butter, cheese, eggs and provisions; flour, grain and feeds; cigars and tobacco. Heavy motor-trucks and double and single horse-drawn trucks run between the warehouses and the terminals and make deliveries.

The success of any business is dependent in a large measure upon coöperation between the firm and those who are employed by it. In this respect *Wm. T. Reynolds & Co.* has had an enviable experience. Throughout the century past, men have entered the service of the house, stayed with it and, by loyalty and untiring effort, have played an important part in the success achieved. Some of them have worked for the firm for all of their active years, in which connection sentiment calls for mention of the name of "Tom" Ward, who came to the elevator upon his return from the Civil War and who only lately died, after more than fifty years of faithfulness. At the present time there is a roll of some seventy-five men and women, associated with the company. One of these has rounded thirty-five years of service; several



Main Offices, 1919  
Wm. T. Reynolds & Co., Inc.



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have passed the quarter-century mark. Those who have been with the business for fifteen years, or for more, are:

Daniel L. Beal  
N. Jay Boyce  
Samuel C. Boyce  
John F. Clark  
James H. Decker  
Andrew Henry  
Manus J. Henry  
John A. Kane  
John Kelly  
Mary A. Kelly

Guy A. Light  
William H. McLean  
John J. Manogue  
Edward F. Myers  
Percy L. Reynolds  
John E. Sweeney  
John B. Van Keuren  
Edgar D. Van Noddall  
Lewis Van Vlack  
Charles H. White

John White

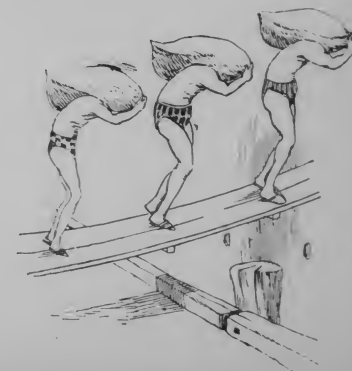
#### SOURCE OF SUPPLY

In this matter-of-fact old world romance is often forgotten but it is present in almost all things if it is only looked for. Even in the materialistic sphere of business romance is to be found and in no business is it more abundant and colorful than in that of the dealer in food-supplies. Let the average consumer pause and consider that, for the setting of his table, the tropics, with their luxuriant growths, are drawn upon; and that the American prairies, with their fields of waving grain, the vineyards on the hills and the farms in the valleys all yield their products to his use and pleasure. Sunshine and blue sky, brilliant vegetation, plant-fruit-and flower-life, the windswept ocean, the rolling plains, the lush meadows with the cattle, the orchards and the gardens, man's labor, daring and

adventure,—all these form integral parts of a background which is actual and real and yet poetic where food-stuffs are concerned. *Wm. T. Reynolds & Co.* searches the markets of the world for its wares and, in addition to the goods it assembles from great distances, it has exceptional advantages in its location in the heart of the Hudson valley. Close to Poughkeepsie there are in operation canning and preserving industries, the outputs of which reach the consumer largely through this company. The aim of the house is to furnish its customers with food-products of such a standard of excellence as shall make the firm-name always a synonym for high quality.

#### AREA OF DISTRIBUTION

The grain and feed business of *Wm. T. Reynolds & Co.* reaches a wide territory and retail dealers are, as a rule, served by direct shipments of grain from mills in the west and with poultry and dairy feeds, flour, etc., in mixed carloads from the company's plant at Fulton, N. Y. The trade of the wholesale grocery department covers an area within a radius of approximately seventy-five miles from Poughkeepsie. During the Great War, 1914-1918, large shipments have been made abroad and to remote parts of the United States. Following the close of the war new export demands are arising and the company now stands on the threshold of a period which foreshadows new conditions and new opportunities in markets and distribution.





# SUBSIDIARY PLANTS

In 1895 *Reynolds & Cramer* purchased the mill and elevator at Poughkeepsie of James Reynolds (son of James Reynolds, Jr.) and since then the same have been conducted under the firm-name of the *Reynolds Elevator Company*. The large warehouse is at the northern end of Garden street, on the tracks of the *New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad* and, through two retail stores (one at 226 Union street, the other at 15 Catharine street), the firm furnishes local retail custom with grain, feeds, seeds, poultry supplies, etc. Mr. Lewis Van Vlack, who has been associated with this branch many years, is now in charge of sales and personnel. Mr. Augustus W. Jewett, identified with the *Reynolds Elevator Company* for a long time, has only just retired because of ill health.

In 1917 *Wm. T. Reynolds & Co.* took over a well equipped mill at Liberty, N. Y., which they now operate under the name of the *Renco Mills*. Mr. M. D. Misner is the manager. The plant serves principally the dairy interests of its section, and has a large local business in flour and grain.

In 1918 *Wm. T. Reynolds & Co.* acquired a plant at Fulton, N. Y., which occupies a particularly advantageous position. Fulton is on the Oswego River and has abundant water-power for milling. It is on the line of the barge canal and is connected with the western grain-fields by all



Renco Mills, Liberty, N. Y.



Renco Milling Company, Fulton, N. Y.





Reynolds Elevator Company Warehouse, Poughkeepsie



Reynolds Elevator Company, Office and Store, Poughkeepsie



water and all rail routes. It is also connected with Poughkeepsie by all water and all rail transportation systems. The business here is operated as the *Renco Milling Company*. Mr. Charles H. Elwell is the resident manager. The mill is equipped with modern machinery and is doing a large business in flour, grain, cereal products, poultry and dairy feeds.

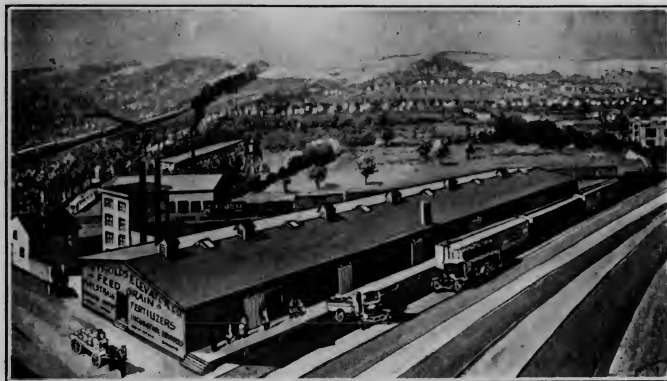
#### PRINCIPLES

Standing at the opening of the second century of its business life, the house of *Wm. T. Reynolds & Co., Inc.*, would emphasize to its friends its motto: *Loyalty-Honor-and-Fidelity*. On those principles the business was begun by its founder. On those principles it will continue to be maintained. The aim of the house is service based on loyalty to high ideals, honor between men, fidelity to duty.





## INTENTIONAL SECOND EXPOSURE



Reynolds Elevator Company Warehouse, Poughkeepsie



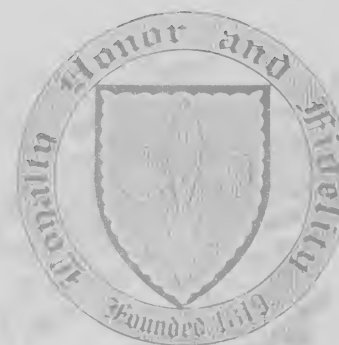
Reynolds Elevator Company, Office and Store, Poughkeepsie



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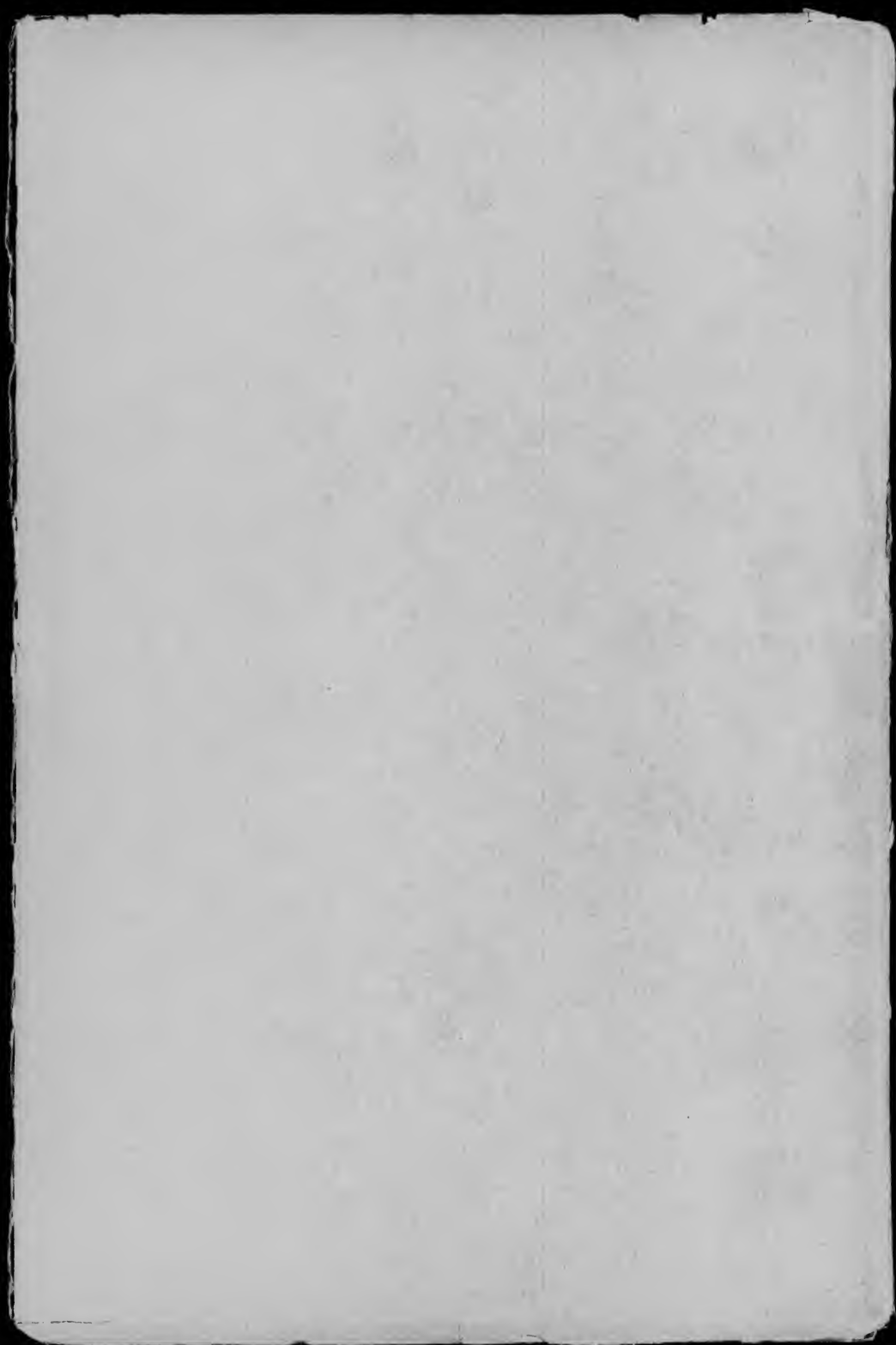
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